



## Meeting note

<b>Project name</b>	Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects (SADEP)
<b>File reference</b>	EN010109
<b>Status</b>	<b>Final</b>
<b>Author</b>	The Planning Inspectorate
<b>Date</b>	20 January 2022
<b>Meeting with</b>	Equinor
<b>Venue</b>	Microsoft Teams Meeting
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	Project Update
<b>Circulation</b>	All attendees

### **Summary of key points discussed and advice given**

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

### ***Project Update***

The Applicant discussed its project update on Q1 2022 and stated that it continued to engage with the local community and landowners particularly in relation to the location of the main construction compound. The Applicant also noted that it continued engagement with technical consultees, through the Evidence Plan Process (EPP) and the Environmental Technical Group meetings, as it is progressing towards finalising assessment work for the Development Consent Order (DCO) application.

The Applicant provided a reminder regarding the project schedule in preparation for the DCO application and noted its work on preparing the DCO, associated plans and draft outline management plans.

The Inspectorate asked whether discussions occurred with Highways England (HE), with regards to projects such as A47 Tuddenham crossing over its cable corridor. The Applicant replied that meetings were held with HE, with positive discussions looking into where they could collaborate and coordinate with construction times.

### ***Targeted Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement***

Phase 2 Statutory Consultation took place between 29 April and 10 June 2021. The Applicant stated that there had been a successful attendance rate, with 1260 visitors and 320 feedback responses received on its first round of consultation. The Applicant noted its upcoming engagement, which included targeted s42 consultation, ongoing update meetings, public information days and pre-submission updates.

The Applicant stated that it had confirmed a preferred site adjacent to A1067 (Fakenham Road) for the main construction compound, ahead of the targeted s42 consultation. This

is because of its connection to the onshore cable corridor and position adjacent to a main distributor road. The Applicant noted the importance of refining the cable corridor and finalising the order limits.

The Applicant aimed to have follow up meetings with the parish councils who are directly next to the cable corridor and highlighted positive responses from local parish councils and local/host authorities.

The Inspectorate asked if there were responses/feedback received from the Phase 2 Statutory Consultation that would shape the nature of the upcoming targeted consultation. The Applicant noted that the information for the targeted consultation would be available virtually, but that it planned to host public, face-to-face information days soon. These had been postponed to date due to the circumstances of COVID and online consultation and engagement took place instead. The parish council webinar held was well attended. The Inspectorate noted the usefulness of webinars during the pandemic, being a beneficial consultation tool, which can be used when physical events are not possible.

The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to identify and clarify parts of legislation (with reference to the s55 checklist) during the consultation process, especially identifying each round that had taken place. It should include detail on the targeted groups for each consultation round. The Applicant confirmed that it will review and incorporate this in their draft consultation report.

The Applicant gave a brief overview of the s42 responses, some of which had concerns regarding the technical aspects of the proposed development, and how these issues had progressed and moved forward. The Inspectorate asked the Applicant about Natural England's (NE) ability to comment on the PEIR conclusions and asked if further engagement would occur at the draft document stage. The Applicant responded that this had had an impact on their pre-application engagement. Since NE's s42 response, the Applicant noted that it has had engagement with NE, regarding NE's concerns on the project's baseline work and other matters.

### ***Derogation Update***

The Applicant provided a general update on its derogation work, giving a summary of activities it had undertaken, which included:

- Pre-application consultation through EPP via Expert Topic Groups.
- Development of long and short lists of options on each site with a suitability ranking process.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> iteration of ornithology compensation information currently with stakeholders.
- Finalised the 3<sup>rd</sup> iteration of draft principle MEEB plan.

The Applicant explained its careful consideration on emerging outcomes from other projects and emerging policy and guidance.

The Applicant briefly discussed the potential MEEB for Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ, which are being matured as part of the Applicants without prejudice derogation case for the MCZ and showed a table which highlighted proposed measures and corresponding agreements with its stakeholders. NE expressed its support on planting native oyster

beds as the preferred measure. The Applicant planned to include other alternatives in its without prejudice submission if preferred options are unsuccessful. This was reflected upon existing projects, including Hornsea 3 and Norfolk Boreas. The Applicant expressed that it was in a good position, having received agreement on the proposed measure relating to oysters and, given the delay in submission, additional time has been afforded to focus on pre-application consultation.

The Applicant discussed potential compensatory measures for Sandwich Tern and Kittiwake. A table was presented that showed issues raised by stakeholders and the Applicant's responses to address these points on current proposals. The range of potential options still needed further development and upcoming stakeholder feedback.

The Applicant noted that NE explained its prioritisation to complete Hornsea 4 relevant representations before responding on its ornithology compensation, which caused a delay and made the programme tighter. The Applicant expressed its uncertainty with regards to the possibility of reaching agreement on potential measures with key stakeholders and the requirements for, and nature of measures, for other species (in-combination impacts). The Inspectorate queried whether despite NE prioritising Hornsea 4, the delay in response could also be to ensure consistency of advice. The Applicant stated it is having regular ongoing engagement with DEFRA. The Inspectorate wondered if this engagement is at a project or industry group basis. The Applicant confirmed that it is both and regular catchups had occurred at project level and highlighted that it had also been involved with an industry led group on strategic compensation.

### ***DCO Application***

The Inspectorate explained its draft document review process and stated a timescale of six weeks minimum. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to draw attention to any specifics and create targeted questions to maximise the value of its review process. The Applicant queried about worst case scenario possibilities (from a scheduling perspective) and the deadline to produce targeted questions and asked whether it is appropriate to stagger documents rather than in bulk, with notice. The Inspectorate signposted the Applicant to give notice with specific queries and stated that it would be ideal to have all documents at once. Despite this, it was not a concern if batches of separate documents were sent. The Applicant noted that late February would be the estimated time for the readiness of draft documents for review. The Applicant asked if this was appropriate and also requested comments on the structure of the consultation report and without prejudice derogation documents. The Inspectorate confirmed that it is happy with the timeframe and the Applicant's requests.

Due to time constraints, it was agreed that the Applicant would contact the Inspectorate following the meeting for practical information concerning application submission (scale of plans, application fees etc).

### ***Specific decisions/ follow-up required?***

The following actions were agreed:

- The Applicant to send meeting presentation to aid the Inspectorate with the meeting note.
- The Applicant to contact the Inspectorate for information on practicalities of application submission.
- The Applicant and the Inspectorate to schedule a follow-up meeting regarding draft document review feedback and to update clarification queries.
- The Applicant and the Inspectorate to run a trial process on filesharing documents.

### ***Clarifications Meeting***

A further meeting was held between the Applicant and the Inspectorate on 24 February 2022 to discuss practical matters concerning document submission and payment of fees.

The Applicant asked for clarification on section 12 Advice Note 6 on plans, and the required scale of plans on their statutory designated and non-statutory designated sites plans and enquired if it would be possible for them to provide plans at a smaller scale than stated in section 12 of Advice Note 6 (1:2500) which also states that flexibility regarding this can be granted for offshore project plans. The Applicant referred to Norfolk Boreas' plans as an example of an exception to the guidance. Following the meeting the Inspectorate confirmed in writing that flexibility could be allowed for any plans with a scale smaller than 1:2500 and requested that the Applicant include an explanation for doing so within the plan's cover letter.

The Applicant asked for clarification on the Inspectorate's fees process, with regards to fee invoices on Advice Note 19.1 and Advice Note 6, Section 19. The Inspectorate confirmed that invoices would be issued from Pre-Examination onwards once the application is accepted, and that payment details for the Acceptance fee would be included within the formal letter issued to the Applicant once the submission date had been confirmed.

The Applicant enquired about facilitating split BACS payments from SEP and DEP which would result in two separate invoices. Following the meeting the Inspectorate confirmed in writing, on guidance from their Finance department, that this would not be possible.

The Applicant queried about advance fee payments to aid the readiness of its finance team. The Inspectorate stated that a fees letter containing payment information would be issued to them no later than four weeks before their confirmed submission date, and that this would be the earliest they could pay the Acceptance fee from. The Inspectorate confirmed that the Acceptance period could not begin until the Acceptance fee had been received. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to provide as much notice as possible of their submission date for them to arrange internal resourcing.

### ***AoB (From Clarifications Meeting)***

The Applicant confirmed that they are intending to submit draft versions of their application documents to the Inspectorate for review by mid-March 2022. The Inspectorate confirmed that another meeting would be scheduled once they had completed their review of the draft documents.

The Applicant suggested if it could provide a list of targeted questions for the Inspectorate to consider on its draft documents. The Inspectorate agreed on its suggestion, which would help speed up the review process.

The Inspectorate noted the use of filesharing sites as its preferred method on receiving application document.